

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully considering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 4-12 are pending in this application. Claims 4 and 10 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 4 and 10. New claim 14 is added in this response. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment, support for which may be found at least at lines 15-23 on page 15 of the original specification as filed.

Amendments to the Specification

The first full paragraph on page 1 of the specification, added by way of preliminary amendment on December 31, 2003, is amended in this response to correct typographical errors in the identification of two Japanese patent applications to which the instant application claims priority. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment, which is made for clarification purposes only.

Election of Species

In response to the election of species requirement, Applicants elect Group I, shown in Fig. 2, upon which claims 10-12 read, for continued prosecution without traverse. Newly added claim 14, which depends from claim 10, also reads on Group I.

Non-elected claims have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

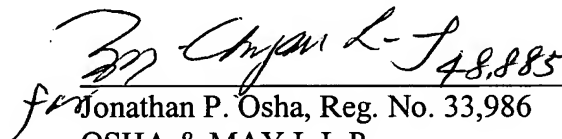
Applicants further note that this election results in a change of inventorship, due to the cancellation of the non-elected claims. Specifically, named inventors Toshihiro Fukuda and Hiroshi Eda remain as inventors of the elected species, while the remaining originally named inventors are now removed from this application. A request for change of inventorship under 37 C.F.R. 1.48(b), and the requisite fee, is included with this response.

Conclusion

Applicants believe this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 10122.005002).

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 10/1/04


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